The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives a brief summary of important matters affecting labor, occurring in the industrial, legislative and judicial fields, and other information that will benefit the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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The valor that struggles is better than the weakness that endures.—Hegel.

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MINE WORKERS ARE ATTACKED BY SECRET FOES

"Reform of the anthracite industry is not possible through the operators. It must come from the miners."

This is the favorite claim of the citizen who assumes what he calls "a broad, comprehensive view." Then he flecks the ashes from his cigar, satisfied that nothing can be done "until the miners abandon their strike method and adopt a constructive program."

This attitude is a cunning aid to the operators. It is intended to shift the blame to workers and to give the operators a clear field for their plan to control wages by making the union impotent. It also aids the operators to conceal vast profits.

It is ridiculous to talk of miners reforming the anthracite industry under present conditions.

The miners have no voice in how anthracite properties are exploited. They are even denied a living wage. How can they discuss royalties, markets, freight rates, the issuance of watered stock that calls for increased dividends, or the operation of high cost mines?

All these are side issues, injected into the present controversy, which may be summarized thusly:

The mine workers say increased wages can be paid out of enormous profits. This the operators deny. The employes reply that they can prove their point if the operators show their books. The operators refuse, as this will debar them from increasing prices when the strike ends. They favor arbitration, but they will not show their books. The miners decline this brand of "arbitration."

Secret foes of the miners, who pose as "constructionists," ignore these facts and lecture the miners on the wastefulness and suffering caused by strikes—all of which is well known to the miners.

Another groups among the miners' secret foes is jubilant that the public is using bituminous coal. This element includes the nation's leading statesmen. For political reasons they dare not express their antagonism to the miners' movement, so they gravely announce that "from an economic standpoint the strike is lost."

While these forces would turn the flank of the strikers' solid army, the operators have launched a direct attack against President Lewis.

Individual appeals are made to the miners to desert and the anthracite region swarms with paid propagandists and story peddlers.

These secret and open attacks have failed. The miners' solidarity is as complete as on the first day of last September—and therein is the cause for frenzy of operators and their allies.

The trade union movement must do its part in maintaining this solidarity. No sacrifice by the organized workers can equal the sacrifice of these 168,000 miners and their families.

The organized workers should also emphasize that if the miners win they will accomplish what the federal government has failed—force publicity of the operators' books. This will reveal how the public is gouged.

Advisers of the miners, and so-called "constructionists" do not refer to this feature of the struggle.

And yet they profess a regard for the public who are the victims of extortion.

SENATE FAVORS MINE CONFERENCE; PLAN IS OPPOSED BY WHITE HOUSE

Washington, Feb. 13.—By a vote of 55 to 21 the senate adopted the Copeland resolution requesting the president to call the anthracite operators and miners to Washington for a conference.

Almost immediately a White House "spokesman for the president" announced there would be no change in the president's hands-off attitude.

This same "spokesman" stated a few days ago that with the increasing use of bituminous coal, and with but six more weeks of winter, the people will have won a great economic victory.

The Copeland resolution is as follows:

"Resolved, That the president be requested to invite to the White House, at such time as he thinks best, the committee of operators and miners, in order that he may urge upon them the national importance of an immediate settlement of the anthracite coal strike."

The words "at such time as he thinks best" was offered as an amendment by Senator Reed of Pennsylvania, who had hitherto opposed by Senator Copeland to have the resolution brought to a vote.

Opponents of the resolution claim that nothing can be accomplished by its passage, while its friends claim that the moral power of the chief executive should be used to the utmost in favor of a settlement.

Senator Robinson, Arkansas, has introduced a bill which would authorize the president to declare that a coal emergency exists. The bill would set up a board of industrial adjustment, consisting of the secretaries of labor and commerce, the chief of the bureau of mines and two disinterested persons selected by the president. It would be a fact-finding body to compel witnesses and the production of records, and to invoke as far as possible public opinion as the compelling influence to bring about a strike settlement. The operators have resisted every effort to make their records public.

Senators Reed, administration, of Pennsylvania, and Bruce, minority party, of Maryland, opposed the Robinson plan by questioning its constitutionality. To insure friendly treatment of his bill, the author had it referred to the committee on education and labor, rather than the committee on mines, where a coal bill has slumbered since its introduction, several weeks ago. This bill was introduced by Senator Oddie of Nevada, an administration senator, who is chairman of the committee on mines. It includes the president's recommendations in his last annual message, but nothing has been done to make these recommendations effective.

ATTACK OF WARD FOOD TRUST FAILS TO FRIGHTEN BANKERS

New York, Feb. 13.—The government's attack in a Baltimore federal court of the proposed food merger does not alarm Wall street. Stocks of the Ward concerns dropped, but financial interests look upon this as a matter between partners, and as a natural result of the feverish merging of everything and anything that is now the rule.

This wild policy was bound to be challenged, even though the government's attitude toward business has not changed. The sheer force of public opinion would compel some sort of official action, it is said.

One financial authority expresses the belief that the present suit will eventually find its way to the United States supreme court, and that the "rule of reason," established by the court in 1911, may be relied upon.

The court first applied its "rule of reason" in the Standard oil case. Later, in the so-called "tobacco case," it ruled that the purpose of that combine was to ruthlessly destroy competition. In the case of the steel trust, the court refused to dissolve that combine because that corporation had no desire to drive competitors out of the market.

Washington, Feb. 13.—The Weekly Bulletin of the National Catholic Welfare Council indicates little faith in legal attacks against the Ward bread trust and food combine unless a strong public opinion is developed. The Bulletin says:

"Even if the Federal Trade Commission and the senatorial committee find that the Ward interests are a monopoly, the department of justice may be either careless or incapable in its prosecution, or the supreme court may decide that the monopoly is a reasonable one. If that happens, nothing further may be done. The monopoly may go unregulated. If it gets out of hand to get the federal government to regulate it, the cry will go up that this is bolshevism or an invasion of states' rights or the putting of government into business. Yet the cities and states can hardly handle a concern so gigantic."

UNIONISTS ESCAPE DYNAMITE FRAME-UP

Buffalo, N. Y., Feb. 13.—The dynamiting charges against 10 members of the Amalgamated Association of Street and Electric Railway Employes collapsed in Federal Judge Hyde's court when a jury returned a verdict of not guilty for four of the trade unionists.

Judge Howe had previously dismissed six of the defendants. When the jury brought in its verdict, the court said:

"Gentlemen of the jury, your verdict is absolutely right. I heartily approve it. The defendants are discharged."

During the trial the prosecuting attorney apologized for the character of some of his witnesses. The prosecution's leading witness was condemned by Judge Howe because of admitted perjury.

One of the accused men, A. F. of L. Organizer Collins. They were charged with conspiring to dynamite the roadbed of the International Railway company's line on August 17, 1922, at the height of the car men's strike against the so-called Mitten management, that operates a company "union" in Philadelphia and which attempted to install this system on the international line.

The unionists insisted that they were victims of a frame-up.

FARMERS ADVISED TO SABOTAGE CROPS

Washington, Feb. 13.—In a statement issued by the department of agriculture, farmers are advised to reduce production.

"Any general expansion in production this year would tend to place farmers in a less favorable economic position than at present," the statement says.

The department discusses wheat, corn, live stock and cotton as interested in some other of those wrongs against property or wrongs against persons which are commonly regarded as being properly within the scope of operation of criminal law, said the court.

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CONVICT LABOR PLAN OPPOSED BY GOVERNOR

Frankfort, Ky., Feb. 13.—Contract labor in penal institutions "can only be regarded as a necessary evil," said Governor Fields, in his biennial message to the Kentucky general assembly.

"In too many instances," said the governor, "it is the policy of contractors to extract each day from the prison laborer every ounce of his strength and endurance, thereby imposing hardships that could not be negotiated for any reasonable consideration, if at all, in private employment. Furthermore, the profits of such employment go to the employer, whereas they should go to the dependent wives and children of prisoners.

"The poverty and need of the wives and children of prisoners are the innocent victims of the lax methods—not a problem that addresses itself to the state and to society for solution."

Governor Fields declared that prisoners should be employed on road work and in the manufacture of goods for state use, with a certain percentage of the convict's earnings to go to his dependents.

The road work should be done by prisoners who have earned one-half of their parole, rather than maintaining road camps filled with irresponsible prisoners.

"It is inconceivable that a prisoner who had served well a good record half of the time necessary to entitle him to parole would desert from a road camp, and his knowledge of the fact that if he failed to render efficient service he would lose his assignment to the road (and thereby lose to his family their share of his earnings) should and no doubt would inspire him to give the best service of which he was capable," the governor said.

NORRIS SEES PLAN TO "GRAB" SHOALS

Washington, Feb. 13.—"It is a matter of common gossip around the capitol that private interests are attempting a new grab at Muscle Shoals," said Senator Norris. In support of this charge, the Nebraska lawmaker called attention to support being given a resolution passed by the house which would create a joint committee to deal with proposed offers for Muscle Shoals by private corporations.

The senator asserted that his bill to save the Shoals for government ownership is being antagonized by interests that desire to "continue to gouge the people through the subterfuge of making fertilizer for the farmers. They have no thought that any large part of the power will ever be used to produce fertilizer."

"In one case the gossip is so direct as to indicate that the proposed offer of one company is already drawn and has been shown around the capital in advance of the legislation we are asked to pass," said Senator Norris.

STATE WAGE LAW UPHELD

Los Angeles, Feb. 13.—The district court of appeals has upheld the conviction of a theatrical manager for failure to pay wages of performers. The court said it is constitutional to imprison an employer for non-payment of wages under circumstances which show an intent to oppress or otherwise defraud an employee.

The public has an interest in the prevention of wrongs of this character, just as the public is interested in some other of those wrongs against property or wrongs against persons which are commonly regarded as being properly within the scope of operation of criminal law, said the court.

DIP INTO TREASURY

Washington, Feb. 13.—The internal revenue bureau has permitted large corporations to write off more than $100,000,000 for war amortization, the senate committee learned by its special committee that is investigating the bureau.

These allowances were "not based on the solicitor's rulings," the committee said. The steel trust drew the largest plum, $27,926,412. The Crucible Steel company was next with $8,912,879. A score of other large corporations secured amounts ranging from $1,000,000 to $5,000,000.

HEMSTITCHERS WIN

New York, Feb. 13.—Members of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' union employed in the tucking, hemstitching and novelty shops have won a six-days' strike. The settlement includes several shops that have kept the trade in a turmoil the past year. Each member of the employers' association deposited $100 as a pledge that he will observe the agreement.

ARMS PARLEY DELAYED BY JOCKEYING NATIONS

Washington, Feb. 13.—The preliminary world disarmament conference, called by the League of Nations, and to be held at Geneva, has been postponed.

European correspondents to American newspapers question whether these nations wish to reduce their armies.

Though not a member of the league, the United States government agreed to be part in the conference and congress has just voted $50,000 to defray expenses of delegates to the preliminary meeting. The delegates were to be appointed by the president and would join with representatives of other nations in preparing a program for consideration by the major meeting.

While the first conference, now postponed, is referred to as "preliminary," it would, in fact, be of first consequence as the program agreed to would be the working basis for these nations when they were formally assembled.

ANTI-UNION PLEADER ROUTED; IS IGNORANT OF MINING LAW

Harrisburg, Pa., Feb. 13.—Walter Gordon Merritt, voluble attorney for anti-unionism, and pleader for the anti-union shop, urged a committee of the state legislature to repeal the anthracite miners' certificate law.

Then Thomas Kennedy, secretary-treasurer of the United Mine Workers, defended the law. When the trade unionist concluded the New York attorney looked like a man who had been run through a concrete mixer.

It was the old story of the professional specialist and the man who knows, through experience. Assuming a patronizing attitude toward "this great man learned in the law, but who knows nothing of mining," the union miner explained the dangers in the anthracite industry, and the skill required to detect gas and properly timber these mines.

"It would be bad enough if a repeal of the law would only result in the death of one of Mr. Merritt's 'free and independent workers,' said the trade unionist, "but the damage would include every worker in the mine, who would lose his life because of the strikebreaker's incompetency." Step by step the witness riddled the claims of the attorrney, who was placed in the position of a man who knew nothing of his subject, and who relies on generalities.

Answering the charge that the miners' union is responsible for the law, Mr. Kennedy reminded the committee that the act was passed in 1897, "before the United Mine Workers of America was born in the anthracite region." The law, he said, was the result of a public opinion that was shocked by the wholesale killings.

It is agreed that the repeal bill has been buried in committee. It is also agreed that the anti-union champion received a lacing he will long remember.

The miners' certificate law provides for a competency examination before a miner can secure a certificate to work in the anthracite mines. The boards of examiners are composed of skilled miners, selected by the judiciary of each county.

Management-Workers' Unity Succeeds, Says Rail Executive

New York, Feb. 13.—"The time has arrived when the employer is prepared to recognize that trade unions can not be eliminated," said Sir Henry W. Thornton, president of the Canadian National railways, at a meeting of mechanical engineers and railway officials.

The speaker discussed the B. & O. co-operation plan between management and organized shop men which has been adopted by the Canadian system. He said the movement is full of significance to American industry and he praised the A. F. of L. policy of co-operation with ownership and management in the elimination of waste in industry as an innovation which has attracted world-wide attention.

"On the Canadian National Railway system we are definitely and irrevocably committed to the principle of co-operation with our employes," said Sir Henry Thornton. He said collective bargaining is just as essential for the welfare of the employe as associations of capital are necessary and useful to the investor.

"I believe the great bulk of our working classes are reasonable, and only seek those things to which they are justly entitled. My personal experience may have been unusual, but I can say frankly that in all of my dealings with working people and trade union officials, I have never found the first but ready for reasonable argument and fair treatment, and I have never had one of the latter let me down or pursue a treacherous or dishonest course.

"The experiment in shop co-operation, upon which we have just embarked, carries with it thus far much promise for the future. We propose to move steadily forward, with the leaders of this movement and we have implicit faith in its ultimate advantage to both the railway and its vast army of employes."

Sir Henry thanked President Jewell of the A. F. of L. railway employes' department, and his associates for the valuable contributions they have made to co-operation. He said the object of union-management co-operation is to furnish continuity of employment. He saw no reason why, if successfully applied to railway shop work, it should not be applied to other industries.

He declared a revolution is a social explosion which did a great deal of useless harm and that it is the burden of far-seeing individuals to bring about improvements in the social system "which are evolutionary as distinguished from revolutions."

"There is no material psychological difference between the ruthless Italian and the explosive Bolshevik," he added. "It is only the accident of birth which makes either the one or the other."

UTILITY COMPANIES WANT OWNERSHIP HID

New York, Feb. 13.—Gigantic holding companies that control small-town public utility corporations are finding it difficult to continue the fiction that municipal bodies have control over the companies through popular stock ownership.

It is the policy to sell stock to citizens, who are assured the utility is community-owned.

The holding companies that are directed by large financial interests in the city are agreed that this fiction must be maintained and the small stockholders must not know they are mere stage scenery. If the awakening comes the system of so-called community ownership will collapse, and the companies are liable to be called upon to lower rates.

Some holding companies have solved the delicate problem by giving their local agents, or managers, the widest latitude in adjusting local problems.

While the small stockholders are in blissful ignorance of the part they play, the holding companies are quietly merging into larger combines that will eventually reach from ocean to ocean.

BARBERS TO BALLOT ON HOME QUESTION

Indianapolis, Feb. 13.—Members of the International Barbers' International union will hold a referendum vote next month on a Barbers' home proposal.

The membership must indicate its willingness to provide sufficient funds for the home. No eligible person shall be accepted as a resident of such home until land is purchased and improvements are completed and paid for. This will require a period of four years at the rate of 35 cents per member per month. The assessment will raise $772,800 for the initial investment. It will require 35 cents per month per member thereafter to maintain the home.

BREAD TRUST IN COURT: ACTION BY GOVERNMENT

Baltimore, Feb. 13.—The government has started court proceedings to halt the Ward $2,000,000,000 food merger.

Suit has been filed in the local federal court against the Ward Food Products corporation, the Ward Baking corporation, the Ward Baking company, the General Baking corporation, the Continental Baking corporation, the United States Bakeries corporation, and several individuals, including William B. Ward.

Ward trust interests have been merging several hundred baking companies, and recently organized the Ward Savings Bank of Pittsburgh, which is intended to trustify all the companies that produce ingredients that go in the manufacture of bread.

This corporation has all the earmarks of a vast feudal system that would control the nation's bread output and provide hospitals and old age homes for its employes. Another provision of the charter permits the company to care for the health of children, although this, likewise, is optional.

The government's petition aims to prevent the formation of the trust and asks that the defendants be adjudged to have violated both the Sherman and the Clayton anti-trust acts, and that they be enjoined from any act in furtherance of the alleged combination.

U. S. TARIFF BOARD OPPOSED BY FARMERS

Washington, Feb. 13.—The National Board of Farm Organizations has filed a brief before the president of the United States tariff commission. The resolutions declare that the commissioners are "clothed with the method of dealing with questions of great public moment is bringing reproach on all reputable governmental agencies."

The commission is charged with reopening hearings in an investigation of the tariff on butter and vegetable oils and taking testimony of representatives of the Danish government in private conference without notice to other interested parties.

The resolutions declare that pressure comes from various quarters and the claim is frequently made that it is "packed" in the interests of powerful influences. The commission was created by the present tariff law. Its advocates claimed that the "tariff would be taken out of politics," as the commission would conduct scientific investigations and that tariff schedules are too high or too low. The claim is now made that rates have only been lowered on Mexican pheasants that are imported for breeding purposes.

STEREOTYPERS RAISE WAGES

Wichita, Kan. Feb. 12.—Organized stereotypers employed on newspapers in the city have raised wages $2 a week. The new rates are $38 for day work and $40 for night work.

Income Tax Publicity Is Ended; Big Taxpayers Win Long Fight

Washington, Feb. 13.—In one of the stormiest sessions in recent years, the senate repealed the publicity feature of the income tax law. The house has gone on record against publicity, and the long campaign heavy taxpayers have waged for secrecy has been won.

The senate's action is a reversal of its policy in May, 1924, when it favored the resolution it now rejects.

Senator Norris again led the fight for publicity, and in a six hours' speech pleaded that the people be permitted to know the tax return of citizens.

"There's only one end, and we are headed for it, if we conduct our business in secret," he declared. "The sunlight will burn to death the germs of corruption, and dishonesty will come from darkness where corruption will breed."

In repeating the story of the Mellon banks, controlled by Secretary of the Treasury Mellon, Senator Norris referred to an affidavit made by Daniel Hickey, a former employe of the internal revenue.

In his affidavit Mr. Hickey swore he had objected to the Mellon National bank, the Union Trust company and the Union Savings bank of Pittsburgh being permitted to file a consolidated return, and save millions of dollars, but his superior, H. L. Robinson, told him, "Sh-h-h! Sign on the dotted line."

"The higher-ups just have to have some things done which don't look right, but which they can't explain to us, and we subordinates should be good soldiers and follow orders." Mr. Hickey quoted Mr. Robinson as saying.

"Isn't it humiliating," said Senator Norris, "to force a high official secretary of the treasury can demand a refund of his taxes and that his own subordinates can pass on it secretly? Would it not be more honorable if such questions were passed on publicly?"

"The secretary of the treasury the kind of a man who will demand that we pass a law enabling his corporation to appear before himself in secret and ask for tax refunds?"

Senator Couzens of Michigan, who also favored publicity, charged that he had been tricked by Senator Smoot, chairman of the senate finance committee. Senator Couzens declared the Utah senator violated an agreement that he (Couzens) could discuss the matter before the senate.

Senator Smoot denied the charge. Later Senator Couzens was offered the floor, but declined.

"I really couldn't proceed in the tempestuous mood I am now in," he said.

STRIKE SAVES LIVES; NO HUMAN SACRIFICE

Philadelphia, Feb. 13.—Two hundred men are alive today who would have been dead if there had been no anthracite strike, said Thomas Kennedy, president of the United Mine Workers.

"Approximately 600 mine workers are killed each year by accidents in and around the mines," said Mr. Lewis. "That means that 50 men lose their lives each month because of the terrible hazards of the anthracite mining occupation. The strike has been in effect five months. In these five months 250 home-loving workingmen would have made the supreme sacrifice in order that the American public might have fuel.

"Thirty thousand anthracite mine workers are injured each year in the same kind of accidents. This is an average of 2,500 maimed and crippled workers each month. Twelve thousand five hundred men would have been injured, in greater or less degree, in five months.

"The anthracite operators are brutally demanding that these workers arbitrate the terms for which they shall offer themselves as human sacrifice upon the altar of public service. They ask the men to arbitrate the price of life and death."

FASCISTI BRANCHES ARE HUGE SPY PLOT

Pueblo, Col., Feb. 13.—The local branch of the Italian Fascisti movement is a spy system maintained by Mussolini, according to E. Clemente, editor of L'Unione, Italian-language newspaper of this city.

"The Fascisti movement in America can not and should not be formed, as it violates the democratic traditions of this large republic," says Editor Clemente.

"The Pueblo branch of fascism has no business to exist. It is against America's high ideals of democracy and freedom. It is nothing more than an Italian spy system to report to the Italian government those who are opposed to Mussolini."

OPEN-PLATFORM CARS OUTLAWED BY COURT

Washington, Feb. 12.—The District of Columbia court of appeals has ruled that it is a violation of law for a street car company to operate an open-platform car which does not protect motormen from inclement weather. The conviction of the Washington Railway and Electric company was upheld.

WOULD-BE U. S. JUDGE UNDER SENATE FIRE

Portland, Ore., Feb. 13.—Opponents of the appointment of Judge Wallace McCamant to the federal judiciary by President Coolidge centered their fire on the jurist's connection with the Pacific Spruce corporation. This concern has endeavored to establish colonies of Japanese peasants and is cutting timber on government land.

McCamant is also charged with violating the Oregon primary law. The voters of his party instructed their delegates to the Republican national convention in 1920 to vote for Senator Hiram Johnson for president. McCamant violated these instructions. The following day he placed the name of Governor Coolidge of Massachusetts in nomination for vice president.

Washington, Feb. 13.—Judge Wallace McCamant's charge that the late Theodore Roosevelt "was not an American" caused such a protest that the Oregon man was forced to modify his statement.

McCamant made this claim before a senate committee that is examining his appointment by the president as a federal judge. He made his reference to President Roosevelt in discussing the latter's claim that federal court decisions should be subject to a review by the people.

DOHENY LOSES APPEAL

San Francisco, Feb. 13.—Edward L. Doheny, oil magnate, has lost another round in his fight to hold the Elk Hills oil reserve, it was learned here today by Secretary of the Navy Denby and Secretary of the Interior Fall.

The federal circuit court of appeals has upheld a district court decision which stripped the oil magnate of all rights in the Elk Hills tract and also cancelled some $11,000,000 in allowances granted by the trial court for work done at Pearl Harbor, Honolulu and in the California fields under the lease.

BUILDING COSTS UP

New York, Feb. 12.—Will some one furnish builders and contractors with a copper-riveted alibi for increased building costs?

As wages have not increased, these business men are in sore distress for an official gest. The public is supposed to get what consolation it can from the following statement: "The cause for the upward change is being generally discussed."